

How to get teens and young adults with chronic conditions to take their medications

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Many young patients with chronic conditions don't take their medications correctly, but 2 new studies point to ways to address such medication non-adherence. The studies will be presented at ASN Kidney Week 2014 November 11-16 at the Pennsylvania Convention Center in Philadelphia, PA.

In one study, researchers led by Frederick Kaskel, MD, PhD (Albert Einstein College of Medicine) and Oleh Akchurin, MD (Weill Cornell College of Medicine) looked to see how young [patients](#) are using [smart phones](#) to help them take their medications. They surveyed patients at a pediatric kidney clinic. The researchers found that the majority of teens continued to use traditional techniques of improving [medication adherence](#), such as filling pillboxes and incorporating medications into their daily routines. Ninety-three percent of surveyed teens had a smart phone in their personal possession, but only 29% were aware about medical mobile apps, even though 50% said they used cell phones for some kind of reminders to take medications. Boys were more likely to use cell phones to remember to take medications than girls and the prevalence of 100% self-reported medication adherence was higher in teens who used cell phones for reminders.

"This study demonstrates that a number of inner city teenagers with kidney disorders are utilizing their cell phones for the management of medication administration even in the absence of organized program promoting such use," said Dr. Akchurin. "Further research efforts are required to fully describe the contemporary pattern of smart phone-

based technology use in medication adherence in this population in order to allow health care providers a meaningful way to incorporate these existing practices into daily clinical activity."

In another study of kidney transplant recipients aged 17 to 30 years, Jeroen Bastiaan van der Net, MD, PhD, Paul Harden, FRCP (Oxford University Hospital, in the UK) and their colleagues found that patients who were involved in a dedicated Young Adult Service were 4 times less likely to experience loss of function of their donated organ than young adult patients who were not involved in this service. Key features of a successful Young Adult Service are a dedicated team comprised of a key physician, nurse practitioner, and youth worker; Young Adult Clinics for patients within a community setting such as a sports club or university; and peer interactions through social events such as bowling or other activities.

"Young adult patients are at a critical point in their educational, psychological, and professional development that will shape their future life. Increasing the survival of their transplants will lead to higher levels of education and employment rates, which will be financially beneficial to society," said Dr. Harden.

More information: "Utilization of Smart Phones and Medication Adherence in Adolescents with Kidney Disorders" (Abstract FR-PO402)

"Reduced Rejection Rates and Improved Graft Survival with a Dedicated Young Adult Service" (Abstract TH-PO1119)

Provided by American Society of Nephrology

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